

INFORMATION REPORT  
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**SUBJECT** Stara Tura National Enterprise in Slovakia

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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1. Prior to the 1945 nationalization, the Stara Tura (Pl49/T26) precision tool enterprise was part of the firm of Michera, Ltd., owned by the Bulgarian Consul, Michera (1). During the war Michera supported the partisans with large sums of money (8 million Kcs), and hid out the Slovak Communist leaders Bastovansky and Smidltke, disguised as workers in his factory. However, after the war he lost the support of the Communists he had formerly assisted, was imprisoned, lost all his property, including his houses, through confiscation, and finally died in 1948. From 1945 to 1949 the Stara Tura plant was one of the Povazske strojarne (Vah River Machine Works, National Enterprise) factories. Now it will probably be called Slovak Enterprises of Precision Mechanics, or will possibly be named for some important political figure.
2. The National Enterprise management has not yet been established. The manager of the Stara Tura plant in Ing. Nerad, an able man and Communist. Since it is the largest precision tool factory in Slovakia, Stara Tura will probably become the main plant of the precision tool combine. In this event it would manage the Goerz Optics Factory at Bratislava (Pl49/X99), as well as two alarm clock factories, one in Bratislava and one in Turciansky Sv. Martin (050/069), a plant producing manometers in Bratislava, another Bratislava factory manufacturing drafting equipment, all of which plants are currently Goerz subsidiaries, and perhaps also later on even the former Volka Bytca furniture plant, which now makes semi-precision measuring devices, such as wooden rulers and metal measuring tapes (2).
3. There is however, a lack of both personnel and office space in Stara Tura, which situation would hinder the formation of a headquarters office there for the national enterprise. Furthermore, the Ministry of National Defense wants the management located further to the north, considering Stara Tura as unsuitable because the security line established by the General Staff runs north from Stara Tura.
4. The buildings of the Stara Tura plant are in good condition. They occupy about 21,000 sq. meters and are single-story, brick structures with iron-girder supported ceilings and gray saddle roofs (3). The machines are excellent. They include lathes, multiple lathes, milling machines, machines to produce water meter gears, grinders for both flat work and rounded objects

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(that is, flat grinders and rotary cylindrical surface grinders), machines for grinding threaded gauges, a few shapers and planes, press-casting machines for aluminum and brass, 20 vertical eccentric presses dating back to 1939 for producing brass machine gun cartridges, tube-drawing machines for manufacturing hypodermic needles, and an unusual machine for calibrating glass tubes, which has recently been built in the plant. This last piece of machinery is a precisely ground iron "thorn" or bar (Zelezny trn) upon which Stara Tura's imperfect glass tubes are placed, electrically heated until soft, and are then shaped exactly, obviating the necessity of further grinding. Because of the small coefficient of heat expansion in glass, it is relatively easy to remove the glass tube once the "thorn" is again cooled.

5. The production program includes water meters, textile spindles (including a machine with eight calibrated vertical spindles) (4), aluminum pocket lighters, medical instruments such as sterilizers of all sizes and sterile instrument boxes for hospitals, medical examining ocular mirrors, stethoscopes, scalpels and instruments peculiar to ear surgery and gynecology, as well as hypodermic syringes and bent surgical needles, and cartridges and bullets for 15, 20, 25, and 30 mm guns. The ammunition production was begun in the fall of 1949.
6. The plant is capable of producing 100,000 water meters annually, but its capacity is not fully utilized as export orders which were expected from China and the Balkans failed to materialize. Production of volume displacement water meters and of hot-water water meters is being planned (5). About six different sizes of water-wheel type water meters are now being manufactured.
7. The production of aluminum pocket lighters was begun after the war. Holland ordered one-half million pieces, but after receipt of a small order of about 50,000, withdrew the large order.
8. Production of medical instruments by the firm of Injecta at Kraslice (N51/430) on the German border was transferred to Stara Tura, which has managed this new production very successfully, and has even increased the production. Hypodermic syringe production is limited only by a lack of glass (6). Stara Tura has attempted to offset this shortage to some degree by producing its own calibrated tubes by means of the "thorn" apparatus described above. Although the Ingla National Enterprise is authorized to produce all needles in the CSR, the need for needles is so urgent that Stara Tura was given approval to produce hypodermic and bent surgical needles, which Stara Tura has done with considerable success. The hypodermic needles are produced by drawing stainless steel tubing to the proper size, resulting in thin tubes such as were delivered from Switzerland and elsewhere before 1948.
9. These needles are very expensive, one kilogram costing as much as 40,000 Kcs in foreign currency. Iron, on the other hand, in the form of gasoline drums is being exported at 1 1/2 Kcs a kilogram. This and other examples have been brought up at discussions of the Five Year Plan program, with the intent of strengthening the position of the precision mechanics industry at the expense of the heavy machine industry, since the latter is unable to command the same high price for iron materials on the foreign market. Another reason given for allowing the precision mechanics industry priority over the heavy machine industry was that the heavy machine industry is limited by the relatively small production of the Czech ironworks. The proposal to lay more emphasis on precision tools and less on heavy machinery in the Five Year Plan was, however, rejected.
10. The military significance of Stara Tura is slight unless it should convert to the production of weapons parts, aiming sights, etc. Such a conversion is, however, unlikely both because of certain opposition by the precision machinists and workers, and because of the fact that Czechoslovakia already has in existing factories sufficient production of such materials. To date, therefore, no plans have been made to convert Stara Tura to military production.

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- 25X1 (1)  Comment: The Prague Michera plant, which was smaller but had better development offices, is to be converted to some other production under the Five Year Plan.
- 25X1 (2)
- 25X1 (3)  Comment: These saddle roofs are composed of a flat roof regularly interrupted with peaked skylights.
- 25X1 (4)  Comment: Conditions in the Czech textile industry were already deteriorating before the war, and throughout the war there was no attempt to improve the situation. Consequently, there was considerable need for extensive renovation and modernization of textile machinery.
- 25X1 (5)  Comment: Certain communities have a central hot water plant which pipes hot water to the houses in the same fashion as cold water, thus obviating the need for hot-water boilers in the houses themselves.
- 25X1 (6)  Comment: The Czech glass industry failed to produce calibrated tubes, and it was therefore necessary to order them abroad; they were smuggled from Germany and bought in Switzerland and France.

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